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The Sixties
(Myths, False Endings and the 1970s?)

Thesis for PhD Dissertation

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The Methods and Objectives of the Research

The two main objectives of this dissertation were first, to prove that the Sixties counter-cultural era (or the Movement) continued well into the 1970s decade, and second, to show how the various justifications for limiting this era within the framework of the 1960s decade were mistaken. In regards to the latter, this required a detailed investigation and analysis of the arguments put forth by both popular and academic historians to close out the Sixties era at, or near, the end of 1969. As to the former, to illustrate how the Sixties era extended well into the next decade, the movement occurrences were traced chronologically for seven years, up until December of 1976, relying especially on articles written on the days that they happened. Using both establishment news sources (such as the *San Francisco Chronicle*) and underground sources (such as the *Berkeley Barb*), a coherent narrative of the time period was constructed from two different perspectives. The archived data revealed long-lost information on forgotten events that changes our understanding of those years.

The Period under Discussion and the Tasks of the Research

The Sixties era (often confused with the shorter 1960s decade) was a time of rebellion, and hope for positive change, throughout many parts of the world. In the United States, it is most often remembered for the following: the African-American civil rights movement, student anti-war activism, and the hippie sub-culture (and thus my main focus in this disseration). Eventually, all three of these groups were joined, more or less, together in a new type of "counter-cultural" community (often referred to as the "Movement") that challenged the status quo in matters ranging from new sexual mores to power politics.[1] Hippie fashions and values often had a major effect on all segments of the youth culture. Unfortunately, there has been a problem of not understanding the Sixties era holistically, meaning in its interconnected and contrary entirety. Instead of seeing all the favorable and unfavorable happenings of the time as being part of the Sixties era, the Altamont rock festival (and other events) have often been designated as the era's

[1] Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), 42.

end point because of the dissension, despair, hard drug usage, and violence that took place there (and the fact that it was held in December of 1969).[2] The result has been that the Sixties era has been shortened; the early and mid-1970s have been cut off.

The Sixties era, like many other periods, has been chopped up and forced to conform into the concept of decades, which usually do not automatically coincide with their particular designations. In other words, history has frequently been simplified (to its detriment) and narrowed down to fit the particular decades of the calendar.[3] Consequently, the most common form of justification (I claim) for shortening the Sixties era is one that is based upon a moral binary code of right or wrong. All Sixties-era events, developments, and incidents are judged (and filtered through) this dualistic perception, to see if they truly fit into our ingrained, Western, religious and philosophically preconceived, absolutist values.[4] Subsequently, most liberal, left-leaning historians (especially those older who have dominated Sixties scholarship until recently) tend to see the essence of the Sixties as a movement that was in the right (meaning on the side of good and what was needed). However, I claim that because of their deep-seated Western moral dualism, they tend to want to frame all relevant matters in an overly positive light. (I will not deal with conservative historians, or the very youngest, as the former view the entire Sixties with overt monolithic hostility, and the later, born after the era was over, never accepted many of the most cherished myths from the start). Nonetheless, the more progressive define the Movement as having had high ethical integrity, and the right moral standards of action on the part of its participants; this has had the unintended result of making it more difficult for them to accept (or add) the more negative elements of the era into their own discourse. To them, the Sixties were a magnificent time when there was great hope among many for their ability to change the world by various sorts of righteous, unified, non-violent direct actions. In this view, true Sixties activism has to uphold these high standards or be cast aside. As a result, all unpleasant personalities, events, or incidents that occurred are seen by such historians to be only aberrations, or blemishes of imperfection. Moreover, the antagonistic incidences that they do recognize almost certainly stem, as they see it, from those who opposed the Movement, i.e., the government, police, or the Ku Klux Klan.

On the other hand, these historians are not completely misguided, as the philosophy of adhering to absolute moralistic (basically Christian) standards was quite pervasive during the early

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[2] Ethan A. Russell, *Let It Bleed: The Rolling Stones, Altamont, and the End of the Sixties* (New York: Springboard Press, 2009), 225.

[3] Arthur Marwick, *The Sixties: Cultural Revolution in Britain, France, Italy, and the United States, c. 1958-c. 1974* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 3.

[4] Peter Gelderloos, *How Non-violence Protects the State* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press, 2007), 3.

portion of the Movement, i.e., reverend Martin Luther King within the African-American civil rights movement, many of the early student anti-war activists who always followed the trends of the black community, and even the hippies with their firm ethos of "peace and love." However, what many scholars fail to take into account, first of all, is how the nature of ideals can never be lived up to—things are just never perfect. Secondly, not everyone within the Movement agreed on all the Sixties assumptions from the beginning, for example, the principle of non-violence. When asked about pacifism, Malcolm X, the influential Black Muslim minister (who followed the teachings of the Koran and not the Christian Bible) said, "I don't mean go out and get violent; but at the same time you should never be non-violent unless you run into some non-violence. I'm non-violent with those who are non-violent with me. But when you drop that violence on me, then you've made me go insane, and I'm not responsible for what I do." After all is said and done, when examining the Sixties narrative, there must come a time for all historians when the opposite forces of despair, fragmentation and violence must be acknowledged, primarily because they had always existed within the Movement, and secondarily because it was an increasing trend. Nonetheless, the mistake most scholars make is to use their own subjective tipping point (on how negativity had gained a significant momentum in the Movement) and to then proclaim it (whenever that may be) as the juncture in which the Sixties era had ended. In other words, since the Sixties are seen as good, positive, and non-violent, any large measures of negativity generated by the Movement must be looked upon as the era's end. Interestingly, these death of the Sixties declarations often seems to be based on the incessant need to close out the Sixties era by the end of the 1960s decade (most often the specific incident chosen is Altamont, but some writers use earlier events such as the break-up of SDS in June 1969). I claim that in order to draw this line at (or towards) the end of 1969, most who write the history of the Sixties do so by setting up the 1960s decade in direct binary opposition to the 1970s decade. As a result, the 1960s are considered "good," while the 1970s are considered "bad." Or perhaps more accurately, what is considered to belong to the Sixties is "good," and what is not (or should not) belong to the Sixties is "bad." To elaborate, the 1960s are seen as a time of hope, unity, and non-violence, while the 1970s (or the late 1960s) are seen as a time of despair, fragmentation, and violence. Although little had changed in 1970, as compared to 1969, the change of decades was treated as something oppositional to what had been happening. Thus, the last year of the 1960s and the first year of the 1970s were separated, and the latter strictly redefined in terms of emphasizing the negative over the positive. In other words, everything that happened during the actual 1960s decade is held up to a standard that is based on an overly positive myth

regarding both individual and group actions, the tactics used, and the perceived outcomes. Contrarily, because of this imposed ethical dualism, all conflicting behavior, opposing forces, and so-called negative contradictions are not accepted into the normal Sixties-era discourse, accept as signposts for its ending. Instead of seeing and acknowledging all behavior differences as being part of a greater whole, what we find describing the progression of the Sixties era is an unfinished two-part dialectic, starting from an asserted positive beginning, and shifting to its opposite negative conclusion. As a result, we find over-idealization, positive illusions, and wishful thinking applied to events during the early days, and overblown feelings of devastation, demonization, and bubbles bursting associated with events of just a few years later. As the story goes, what was at first all rosy and innocent soon became dreadful and flawed at Altamont. This interpretation of history is much too simplistic, and just not true. The problem is that there is no third step in the dialectic, no Hegelian-type synthesis of the contradictions. There is no going beyond the dualism, of seeing portions of the Sixties era as being neither overly positive nor overly negative. The complete picture must continually include both opposites: good and bad, positive and negative, non-violence and violence, hope and despair. If we weed out and disown what we call the negative from the early years of the era or fail to see the good during the later years, we distort the Sixties era not only by dismembering the early and mid-1970s, but by deceiving ourselves on how perfect the first few years of the Movement really were.

Thus the first task in this dissertation was to determine why the Sixties era was cut short by so many writers of history, who usually ended it around late 1969.

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Research History, Principal Problems, and Sources

While the beginning and the peak of the Sixties counter-cultural Movement is well documented by many articles, books, and movies, the post-peak and the last years are nearly always neglected (or even denied to have existed in terms of being a real part of the Movement). For example, many university courses, such as "The Sixties" at Sonoma State University in California, begin with the post-Second World War period of the late 1940s and end with Woodstock during the summer of 1969.[5] In fact, it is very popular with most publications about the counter-culture to end with 1969, usually with the Altamont festival and the Charles Manson family killings in December (e.g., David Dalton's "Altamont: End of the Sixties Or big mix-up in the middle of nowhere?" 1999). I claim that this is a distortion of the Sixties era, resulting in a peculiar predicament of often ending the Sixties storyline shortly after discussing its peak at the Woodstock festival (see Rob Kirkpatrick, 1969/2009, or Robert Santelli, *Aquarius Rising: The Rock Festival Years*, 1980).[6] [7] The significance is that many years of the Sixties era are excluded. Indeed, one of my major goals is to reassemble this greatly neglected part of history, the forgotten years of 1970 to 1976, and to show that, as every time period has a beginning and a build-up, it too must also have a decline and an end (William Strauss and Neil Howe, *The Fourth Turning*, 1997).[8] Additionally, even if some publications or university courses do mention the 1970s, they usually merely touch upon either the first year of 1970 (Chapman University), or the first few years very superficially (University of Washington). Another import contribution I assert is to show how, in order for historians to fit the Sixties era into the 1960s decade, the Sixties are in a sense whitewashed of their inherent and underlining more negative features, at least until the authors find it useful to end it. The technique used to justify this sort of downplaying of flaws or failures consists of painting a very positive picture of the Movement throughout most of the sixties decade (as best as they can) until the dam bursts and the overwhelming negativity cannot be concealed anymore. I state that this awaking to Sixties

[5] The Sixties (Course syllabus, Liberal Studies 320, Sonoma State University, Fall 1987).
[6] Rob Kirkpatrick, *1969* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, 2009), 264-265.
[7] Robert Santelli, *Aquarius Rising: The Rock Festival Years* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1980), 162.
[8] William Strauss and Neil Howe, *An American Prophecy: The Fourth Turning: What the Cycles of History Tell Us About America's Next Rendezvous with Destiny* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997), 28-33.

negativity occurs arbitrarily at different moments in time for the various writers (some examples include Gene Anthony, *The Summer of Love*, 1980, alleging 1967 as the end of the hippie movement, Robert Houriet, *Getting Back Together*, 1972, declaring 1968 as the end of hope in the political activist movement; and Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (eds.), "Takin' it to the streets," 2003, maintaining 1968 as the end of the African-American civil rights movement for most people).[9] [10] [11] Nevertheless, when the dam breaks, watch out, as the rosy myth of the early years of the 1960s turns often quite suddenly, and dramatically, to its opposite characterizations. Whereas everything was unified, hopeful, and non-violent, it turns to fragmentation, despair and violence (see Ethan A. Russell, *Let It Bleed,* 2009). The end result of this binary dualism is to ignore everything that is after the cut-off line (usually after 1969). This is an error, as the early and middle 1970s was a extension of a period of time that must be called the Sixties, as it still consisted of the war in Vietnam, anti-war protests, hippie communes, rock festivals, and African-American and other peoples of color fighting for their liberation.

Not only are there many theories on when the overall Sixties era ended, but there are many on when each of the various aspects of the Movement concluded. Certainly one of the most popular explanations on the demise of the Sixties hippie movement derives from the horrible tale of Altamont. In Russell's *Let It Bleed*, the Altamont festival was foreseen as being the next higher step after Woodstock, which had always up to this time gotten bigger and better. Nonetheless, here the love generation degenerated into an orgy of violence, murder, hard drugs, and insanity. As the story goes, youth after Altamont woke up for the first time and realized that they had lost it, that they were no better then anyone else, and had no chance (or ability) of changing the world. Altamont was so much of an opposite of Woodstock, just so devastating, that naïve hippie idealism ended right there and then. For Todd Gitlin in *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, the dream of Aquarius was lost and "cracked into thousands of shards."[12] The problem with this celebrated version of history espoused by Russell and Gitlin (and countless others) is that it is caught up in this sudden negative turn of events as if it were something new. As I claim, these negative circumstances did not emerge at Altamont; they had always been part of the hippie scene. That goes for the Manson family hippie killers too. Way before the December 12, 1969 issue of *Life*

[9] Gene Anthony, *The Summer of Love: Haight-Ashbury at Its Highest* (Millbrae, California: Celestial Arts, 1980), 175.
[10] Robert Houriet, *Getting Back Together* (New York: Avon Books, 1972), 16-20.
[11] Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines (eds.), *"Takin' It to the Streets"* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 132.
[12] Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 406.

Magazine (titled "The Love and Terror Cult"), those who were part of the scene (and would admit it) knew of the "dark edge of hippie life" (Curt Rowlett). Nonetheless, though usually swept under the rug, repugnant facts were reported early on by such authors as Lewis Yablonsky in his *The Hippie Trip* book from 1968. In his first-hand experiences from 1967, Yablonsky describes the new hippie subculture as already immersed in bitterness, disillusionment, hard drugs, hostility, violence, theft, rape, and even murder.[13]

A typical timeline narrative for the African-American civil rights part of the Movement closely resembles that of Tom Head's, *History of the Civil Rights Era (1954-1968)*, written in 2009: Brown v. Board of Education (1954); Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott lead by Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (1955-56); desegregation of Little Rock Central High (1957); Greensboro lunch counter sit-ins (1960); the Freedom Rides (1961); James Meredith admitted to the University of Mississippi (1962); the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, "I have a dream" (1963); Freedom Summer in Mississippi (1964); the Civil Rights Act (1964); the Voting Rights Act (1965); the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. (1968); and ending with the Civil Rights Act (1968). Indeed, the most common opinion held by historians conclude that the civil rights era ended with the murder of Martin Luther King on April 4, the riots in more than 100 cities that followed, and finally the passage of the 1968 Civil Rights Act on April 11. The rationale for this closure is said to be based on the truly great impact the loss of Martin Luther King had on the Movement. King, according to Andrew Gavin Marshall in *The American Oligarchy, Civil Rights and the Murder of Martin Luther King*, was "without a doubt the leader of the Civil Rights movement," and was still in his last year steering it against poverty and empire. His death created a vacuum for strong national leadership, which together with an already declining organizational strength, facilitated a weakening of the overall civil rights movement (Doug Mcadam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency*, 1930-1970, 1982).[14] Moreover, by losing the biggest champion for non-violent direct action, the Movement quickened on its path towards a revolutionary struggle (which many historians such as Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward in *Poor People's Movements*, 1977, do not include within the civil rights discussion). Instead, most historians, like Farber, agree with Martin Luther King (and his Southern Christian Leadership Conference) that upholding the principal of non-violence was essential for the survival of the black cause (as millions of whites angrily turned against the civil rights movement when black radicals

[13] Lewis Yablonsky, *The Hippie Trip* (New York: toExcel, 1968), 348-366.
[14] Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 182-186.

began to riot).[15] Martin Luther King (who after all was a Baptist minister) believed that any form of violence was incompatible with the Christian faith; however, with him now gone, there was much less debate on the matter. In fact, after King's assassination, Stokely Carmichael (an "Honorary Prime Minister" of the Black Panther Party) proclaimed, "White America killed Dr. King last night. She made a whole lot easier for a whole lot of black people today. There no longer needs to be intellectual discussions, black people know that they have to get guns." Thus, the purpose of civil rights struggle underwent a radical change, "from a peaceful reworking of social stratification into a forceful and violent destruction of white culture and the establishment of black power as dominant." Nonetheless, these various forms of Black Power (black nationalism and black separatism) that were very popular in 1968/69 did not start then; in fact, many of the young and the more radical began entertaining these ideas (in full force) by the middle of the 1960s decade. Indeed, what set the Black Power movement apart from the earlier integrationist types was the notion of using violence (either in self-defense or as an offensive tactic). My question is, if black militant groups like the Black Panthers were already forming in 1966, and the Deacons of Self Defense existed as early as 1964, then how can we not include the 1970s black revolutionary struggles into the Sixties historical discourse on liberation? I claim that we can! Surely, violence was not new to African-Americans, as urban ghetto riots began in 1963 and increased throughout the 1960s decade. The great ideals and ethical standards of the non-violent strategy went out the door during these uprisings, "reason was gone and looting, arson, and terror took over."

Those many commentators who focus more on the student anti-war (and other various political) aspects of the Movement end the history of the Sixties anywhere from the middle of 1968 to the end of 1969. For Terry H. Anderson, in his 1995 book called *The Movement and the Sixties*, the era ends in November of 1968 with the election of President Nixon, as it is seen as the victory for those who oppose the hippies, anti-war protesters, and black rioters—and the whole liberal agenda which the average man felt it had all emerged from.[16] Similarly, the 2002 book called *Imagine Nation* (edited by Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle) states that Nixon's election to the presidency (on a anti-counterculture platform) gave such a harsh dose of reality to the Movement that it caused severe discouragement and soon fragmentation.[17] In "Takin' it to the Streets," Bloom and Breines make a case for the Sixties slowly ending in 1968, with a "decline in the quality of

[15] David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1994), 116.
[16] Terry H. Anderson, *The Movement and the Sixties: Protest in America from Greensboro to Wounded Knee* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1995), 293.
[17] Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle (eds.), *Imagine Nation* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 12.

concepts, and morality" starting in that year, and followed by bitter infighting by 1969. While James Miller in *Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago*, 1994, places the end after the split of SDS in June of 1969.[18] For Godfrey Hodgson in his *America in Our Time*, written in 1976, the end of the Sixties was a twofold process. First, on November 3, 1969, Nixon went on air and gave his famous "silent majority" speech, declaring that it was time for the majority of the people to regain its voice and "not permit U.S. policy to be 'dictated' by a minority staging 'demonstrations in the streets.'"[19] Secondly, twelve days later, on November 15, because of intense pressure from the Nixon administration, no live coverage was given by any of the television networks during the largest anti-war demonstration in history; this "convinced the American people that the peace movement was dead." In other words, according to Hodgson, there was a deliberate attempt by Nixon (and many of the elite) to get the media to shift "away from emphasis on the militant Left . . . and toward the center and the Right." Not surprisingly then is columnist Nicholas von Hoffman being quoted in IRWIN and Debi Unger's 1998 edited book, *The Times Were a Changin*,' who called the huge November 1969 Moratorium protest the last big one (discounting the ones in the 1970s) "It was the best, it was the biggest, it was the last of the anti-war (mass) demonstrations."[20] The problem with all the above authors is that they focus their attention on perhaps the beginning of the end of the Sixties, and not on the true end of the era. The Sixties era was far from over, even if there was a concerted effort to squash it. Although some of the above scholars do admit to various actions and activities still existing into the 1970s, they are either barely mentioned (Bloom and Breines), quickly skimmed through (Gitlin) or treated as belonging to a different time period, i.e., the 1970s (Unger and Unger). On the other hand, Anderson and Hodgson focus too much on the perception of mainstream America of the Movement during the 1970s, and not on the actual movement itself (I argue that nobody had truly filled in as thoroughly as I do on what was going on inside the Movement during the early and middle 1970s). While Braunstein and Doyle think too much in terms of the 1970s being nothing but competing small movements opposing each other, they lose the thread of seeing how all these various interest groups within the Movement still belonged to a greater whole.

Finally, there are those who do put the end of the political as well other aspects of the Sixties into the 1970s decade. For example, Gitlin called the Greenwich Village townhouse

[18] James Miller, *Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1994), 350-390.
[19] Godfrey Hodgson, *America in Our Time* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1976), 377-389.
[20] Irwin Unger and Debi Unger (eds.), *The Times Were a Changin': The Sixties Reader* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1998), 297.

explosion that occurred on March 6, 1970, the end of the Sixties student movement. It was caused by the premature detonation of a bomb being built by members of the radical Weather Underground; three members died instantly. Wrote Gitlin, "What Altamont was for the (hippie) counterculture, the townhouse was for the student movement, the splattering rage of the 'death culture.'" For David Farber, in his *The Age of Great Dreams* from 1994, the Sixties narrative actually keeps on going until around the Vietnam War ceasefire in January 1973. While in Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin's *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s*, 2011, the Sixties only end with the resignation of President Nixon on August 9, 1974 (I claim that even this is too early).[21] Nonetheless, even authors who do place the end of the Sixties era into the 1970s decade, while putting tremendous emphasis on events that happened during the 1960s decade, only give trivial space to the 1970s decade. For example, Farber wrote over two-hundred pages covering the years 1960 to 1969, and a mere seven pages about the 1970-1973 period. Gitlin wrote nearly four hundred pages covering the 1960s decade and less than thirty on the 1970s decade. Moreover, Isserman and Kazin similarly write only twenty pages on the five years of the 1970s that they claim as being properly part of the Sixties, after writing nearly three-hundred pages on the previous decade. It's really the same story on the part of everyone, unless the book is specifically about the Seventies, in which case, the first half of the decade is skimmed through and the last half is thoroughly covered. In other words, the first six years or so of the 1970s always seems to be neglected. My dissertation is meant to fill in the blanks and show what was going on in the Sixties movement during its final years that spanned more than half of the 1970s decade.

Overall, there are three ways that most historians try to structure the American Sixties in order to resolve the problem of integrating the negative features of the era into its narrative. The first, which I have already covered (and which is the most common) begins brightly with the election of John F. Kennedy as President in 1960, continues hopefully during the early years of the Johnson administration (peak of civil rights success), and fades out somewhere in the late 1960s as the Movement turns increasingly negative (or non-Sixtyish). The second scheme divides the 1960s decade into two sections, labeling them as "good" or "bad." The third arrangement, perhaps least often used, is called the "long Sixties," which allows for the continuation of the Sixties era into the 1970s. My disseration speaks out mainly against the first two methods.

[21] Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, *America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 269-300.

The second method, I assert, is more extreme then the first. It not only separates the first years of the 1970s decade from the Sixties era (like the first method), but splits into two parts, distinguishing the 1960s decade in order for the Sixties to retain its alleged ethical and moral purity. Here, the line of where to end the Sixties era is moved back from 1968/69 to somewhere in the middle 1960s. In other words, more of the 1960s decade is not considered the Sixties (or the real Sixties). The "good Sixties" now refers to approximately the first half of the 1960s decade. An example of this is Gitlin, who separates the Movement into what was constructive and valuable from that which was unproductive and harmful. He considers the "good Sixties" to include the civil rights movement and the early stages of the student and anti-war movements (1960-1966), while the "bad Sixties" encompassed the formation of radical underground groups such as the Weather Underground and the Black Guerrilla Family, which focused on bombings and "armed struggle (1967-1969/70)." Similarly, Paul Goodman, the famous American novelist and social critic of the time, considered the first half of the Sixties as worthwhile and important. He approved of the 1964 Free Speech Movement in Berkeley and said it was "making a lot of sense." However, he too became disappointed with the loss of "moral integrity" and "political concreteness" that he saw in 1962 and 1963. By the late 1960s, Goodman, the intellectual, felt disconnected from hippie youth, urban riots, and the "bravado, into increasingly empty—or violent—talk of revolution." Goodman, like many others, makes a clear distinction: SDS at Port Huron in 1962 is good, while Yippies in Chicago in 1968 are bad; Civil Rights movement is good, Black Power movement is bad; SNCC invites white youth to Mississippi in 1964 is good, SNCC kicks whites out of the organization in 1966 is bad; New York folk music and early Bob Dylan is good, San Francisco psychedelic rock is bad. Finally, Bernard Von Bothmer recently added a new dimension to this topic (a combination of methods two and three) into his book, *Framing the Sixties: The Use and Abuse of a Decade from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush*, 2010.[22] He states that politicians of today use the "good Sixties" and the "bad Sixties" concept for their own political gain. Allegedly, they too consider the 1960s decade to have consisted of two parts, the supposed idealistic early years when the Movement upheld its principles and was seen positively (or what we call the Sixties), and the despair, chaos, and violence that followed (or what we disown as not the Sixties). As a result, American politicians have began to play a game of claiming the "good Sixties" for their own political party, and pinning the "bad Sixties" onto the opposition. Wrote Bothmer, "What conservatives do is identify liberals with the

[22] Bernard Von Bothmer, *Framing the Sixties: The Use and Abuse of a Decade from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush* (Amherst, Massachusetts: University of Massachusetts Press, 2010), 11-16.

bad Sixties. And what liberals try to do is identify themselves with the good Sixties." Indeed, the Democratic party (the more or less liberal party) claims the Sixties (1960-1965) for itself, as it was the Democrats who controlled the executive branch from January 1961 to January 1969. For them, the Sixties consisted of John F. Kennedy, Robert Kennedy, the Peace Corps, Martin Luther King, the integrationists, the civil rights movement, the March on Washington in 1963, the Civil Rights Act, and the Voting Rights Act. The Republicans, on the other hand, conjure up images of the "bad Sixties" to use against them. The picture they hold up consists of different years, not of the early 1960s (which they claim as part of the Fifties) but actions and incidences that occurred not only in the late 1960s, but even up to 1974 (the Republicans like to disown these years as it was they—Nixon—that held the office of the presidency from 1969 to August of 1974). In the end, the only real debate between the three authors is where to draw the line that separates the "good Sixties" from the "bad Sixties. For Goodman and Bothmer, the "bad Sixties" begin a little earlier (1965 vs. 1967), while for Gitlin, they include the whole escalation of the Vietnam War and its corresponding anti-war protests. Goodman and Bothmer do not make a distinction between the more peaceful demonstrations of the middle 1960s from the more violent, anti-American and pro-Viet Cong protests in later years, as does Gitlin. One note of interest is how Bothmer describes how Republicans use the first five years of the 1970s in the Sixties debate. According to him, the pinpointing of when the Sixties actually took place has more to do with the ideologies one holds than to "specifics." Nevertheless, the problem with this "good Sixties" verses "bad Sixties" conceptual model is that it continues to separate the positive from the negative. To not admit that the Sixties era was always a mixed bag of good and bad, right and wrong, hope and despair, and non-violence and violence only leads to continually shrinking the Sixties era even further, and not stretching it out as is needed.

The third method, called the "long Sixties," does allow and include the continuation of the Sixties era into the 1970s (my dissertation is in this tradition, but with differences that I will mention later). The idea that the Sixties lingered into the next decade is not a new idea, but has been more or less a problem that many historians needed to solve. In fact, those using the first and second methods of shortening the Sixties have on occasion also admitted to certain Sixties themes remaining after 1969, but they either limited their work to a few pages attached to the end, or used the "good Sixties" and "bad Sixties" model in order to prove that those years were not really the Sixties anymore. In contrast, those who argue for a "long Sixties," as I have done, do so in spite of the growing negativity and degeneration that was affecting the Movement (there were many positive

things too) during the 1970s; however, I and others clearly see this only as a continuation of the trend that started in the 1960s decade. Moreover, if one stops and thinks, the first several years of the 1970s look identical to the late 1960s. The same issues and activities continued, for example: the war in Vietnam, the military draft, anti-war protests, black power, hippies, communes, and rock festivals. For Mark Hamilton Lytle, author of *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon*, 2006, the Sixties not only continue after 1969, but start before 1960.[23] Diverging from most historians, LYTLE treats the roughly twenty years from the rise of Elvis Presley to the fall of Richard Nixon as one era. He identifies three distinct phases: the "cultural ferment" of the 1950s ending with the 1963 assassination of John F. Kennedy; the 1964-1968 "uncivil" wars with the rise of the Vietnam War, protests, hippies and racial violence; and finally the Richard Nixon years of "new value and identity movements," including those of environmentalists, consumer advocates, feminists, gay, Latino, and Native American activists. My dissertation takes a different approach (besides not dealing with when the Sixties started), as I do not waver from my original three Movement groups: African-American liberation, student anti-war, and the hippies. I do not shift to newer groups during the 1970s, as is so common. Instead, I continue to follow my three original concerns, documenting their activities, while also incorporating the newer groups into this ongoing alternative Sixties network. Perhaps of all the literature that I have read, Anderson, in *The Movement and the Sixties*, 1995, explains the Sixties era in a way in which I can agree with the most. He arranges the Sixties era in two parts: the First Wave called the Surge (1960 to 1968), and the Second Wave called the Crest (1968 to 1973). First of all, unlike historians that use the second method of structuring the American Sixties, Anderson does not try to label one part of the 1960s as "good Sixties" or another as "bad Sixties." Although he divides the Sixties into two parts, he does not try to end the Sixties in the middle of the 1960s decade. Secondly, Anderson also does not look to cut off the first years of the 1970s, as do those who use the first method. In fact, Anderson calls the 1969 to 1973 years as the peak of the Sixties era! He states that although the Movement is seemingly fragmented into many smaller parts (i.e., environmental concerns, consumer issues, women's issues, gay rights), the fact not to miss was that the Movement was still "expanding." There were more people involved in the Movement during the early 1970s then ever before, as the younger part of the baby boomers were just coming of age. Nevertheless, I believe that both Lytle and Anderson end the "long Sixties" too early. For Anderson, the Sixties end in 1973

[23] Mark Hamilton Lytle, *America's Uncivil Wars: The Sixties Era from Elvis to the Fall of Richard Nixon* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 3-10 .

with the Vietnam War ceasefire in late January, noting that there was "no outpouring of support, no mass marches, no bus brigades heading for Wounded Knee" (during the American Indian Movement's long standoff against the American government from February to May of that year). As for Lytle, he continues to call the 1970s the Sixties until the resignation of President Nixon in August of 1974. In my dissertation I make a case for ending the Sixties sometime during the latter part of 1976. Indeed, I believe that the most important part of my contribution to studying the history of the American Sixties era is the uncovering of historical events of the Movement that have been long lost to historians and lay persons alike. For example, I can prove with my work that Anderson is not correct in his claim about Wounded Knee. I discovered that there were marches and bus brigades that headed to Wounded Knee; in fact, one person who was shot by federal marshals was a member of the counter-culture who came to help. To conclude, I chronicle in great detail seven years (1970-1976) of countercultural Movement events and other activity. I feel that the further I researched into the 1970s, the more I realized that nobody has ever done what I have done. Thus I spent ever more time on the middle 1970s.

3

Principal Conclusions of the Research

The rationale of most historians for ending the Sixties era in 1969 is based on their inability to integrate the unfavorable aspects of the counter-cultural movement into their overly positive dialogue about that era. After considerable analysis I came to the conclusion that the most predominant negative attributes associated with events considered by them as marking the end of the Sixties (i.e., Altamont rock festival) were viewed as consisting of fragmentation, despair, and violence (and to a lesser extent drug abuse). On the other hand, the Woodstock rock festival (the so-called peak of the counter-culture) was overly idealized and said to have consisted of the opposite true attributes of the Sixties era such as unity, hope, and non-violence. To determine when the lack of unity, hope and non-violence began to creep into the Sixties counter-culture, my investigation led me to the conclusion (after reviewing the whole 1960s decade) that they had always been part of the movement, although continually increasing with each passing year. Lastly, I turned to the 1970s in order to find out if the if the Sixties Movement had continued to exist after 1969.

In closing, to state that the Sixties era ended at Altamont (or any other event) on or before December of 1969 is simply preposterous. As the chronology of events of the 1970s shows, nothing really changed the following year after the numerical 1960s decade ended. The same type of events and beliefs held by the countercultural movement during the late 1960s persisted. The Vietnam War, and the protests against it, extended well into the next decade. The "hippie" lifestyle, and with it the appetite for rock festivals, rock music, sexual liberation, experimentation with psychedelic drugs, freedom to explore one's potential, freedom to create one's self, freedom of personal expression, freedom from scheduling, freedom from rigidly defined roles and hierarchical statuses increased unabated. The clamor for equality, justice, liberation for women, and various racial and ethnic groups, such as African Americans, American Indians, Chicanos, and Puerto Ricans, intensified. Other social movements such as those favoring alternative medicine, anti-nuclear action, environmental action, gay rights, and organic foods surged.

The claim that the Sixties ended at Altamont is in large extent based on several misunderstandings, or myths, such as:

- The 1960s were a time of hope, unity, and peace for the counterculture (that is why violence and chaos signified the end of the Sixties).
- During the 1960s the political establishment and the majority culture were accepting towards hippies, student radicals, and minority struggles (violence such as that at Altamont turned them against the Movement).
- The philosophical basis for the Movement from the beginning was solely of some variation of Mahatma Gandhi's belief in non-violent civil disobedience.
- Woodstock was the opposite of Altamont (the fiction of duality).

The first myth, that the 1960s were a time of hope, unity, and peace for the counterculture, is far from the truth. Altamont was not the first time violence occurred in connection with the Movement. It was also not the first time division and a loss of optimism arose. Concerning the hippie movement, even during the so-called "Summer of Love" there were riots, rapes, and murders. In Sixties mythology, the summer of 1967 is when the hippie movement was at its supposed highest and most pure (the First Human Be-In in January 1967 was when most people first even heard of them). However, deleted from this first myth of peaceful coexistence are incidents such as the one on July 9 when "peace and love" hippies physically attacked tourists who came to observe them in Haight-Ashbury, and when the police came the hippies fought with the officers. To be clear, this was not a unique occurrence in the Haight (where the hippie movement began). In fact, there had already been similar incidents in this still budding bohemian enclave on January 14, March 26, April 2, April 10, April 23, and June 22. Rape, according to the hippies themselves, was "as common as bullshit on Haight Street." Printed by the Diggers' own Communication Company on April 16, 1967 was the following: "Pretty little sixteen-year-old middle-class chick comes to the Haight to see what it's all about & gets picked up by a seventeen-year-old street dealer who spends all day shooting her full of speed again & again, then feeds here 3000 mikes (micrograms of LSD, 12 times the standard dose) & raffles off her temporarily unemployed body for the biggest Haight Street gang bang since the night before last." Finally, on August 3, and again on the 6th, well-known Haight-Ashbury LSD drug dealers John Kent Clark and Superspade were found murdered, with more hippies killed in the following weeks.

The situation with violence at hippie communes and rock festivals around the country was no different, either. In October of 1967, Groovy 21 and Linda 18 were found murdered at a Lower East Side New York City "hippie drug party." According to *Time* magazine, "Groovy tried to defend the girl and was smashed with one of the boiler-wall bricks, his face crushed. Linda was raped four

times and bashed with a brick." Lastly, there were rock festivals with large-scale violence even before Altamont, these would include the Newport '69 Festival on June 20-22, 1969; the Denver Pop Festival on June 27-28, 1969; the Newport Jazz Festival (with rock bands included) on July 3-6, 1969. The following was a description of what happened at the Denver Pop Festival. "First came a barrage of rocks, then came bottles and beer cans. Those who had crashed the fence successfully at the south end of the stadium and were now inside climbed to the top of the grandstand and hurled objects down on the police below. Political slogans were heard amid the shouting, and ALM members who had been passing out leaflets before the disturbance began became part of the unruly crowd. One police officer was knocked to the ground by a large wine bottle, and the police decided that the situation was now serious enough to use tear gas. The canisters were shot into the crowd, only to be thrown back at the police by brazen members of the throng."

The second myth that during the 1960s the political establishment and the majority culture were accepting towards hippies, student radicals, and minority struggles is also not true. Violence such as that at Altamont did not turn average people away from the Movement; it only reinforced their already negative views about those involved. The common person believed hippies to be decadent, self-destructive, unhealthy, immoral, and as a California state assemblyman stated, "potentially the greatest threat to our nation's traditional social structure." In fact, on March 23, 1967, the City of San Francisco officially declared hippies "unwelcome." As far as the Vietnam War, many ordinary folks supported U.S. involvement, giving credence to the "domino theory," a belief that if one country fell to communism, then the bordering countries would also fall, thus justifying the war. As a result, student anti-war activists were viewed as unpatriotic, communists, traitors, faggots, and agitators. Some blue-collar workers, or "hard hats," even physically assaulted anti-war demonstrators. The most famous "hard hat riot" occurred in New York City when 200 construction workers broke through police lines and injured 73 by beating the "longest haired youths first."[24] What they considered the most despicable was how "radicals would wave the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese battle flags, while burning and urinating on the American flag." Their favorite slogans after watching the riots at the Pentagon in October 1967, the university take-over at Columbia in April and May of 1968, and the violent clash at the Chicago Democratic National Convention in August of 1968 (to mention just of few) became, "All the way, USA," and "America, love it or leave it." To Middle America, the revered Woodstock itself was not a triumph. Instead, seeing half a

[24] "Workers Attack Students in N.Y.," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 9, 1970, A1.

million kids smoking dope, swimming naked, and listening to loud rock music was an "outrage and an affront to American values of decency and duty."

The third myth that the philosophical basis for the Movement from the beginning was solely some variation of Mahatma Gandhi's belief in non-violent civil disobedience was never completely true even from the beginning. It is beyond question that Martin Luther King emulated Gandhi's example during the African American civil rights struggles from 1955 to his death in 1968. It is also valid that today King is the most famous leader of that era, and even back then, had the most national exposure for delivering his famous "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963, and winning the 1964 Nobel Peace prize. Nonetheless, many have argued that in the black community, it was not King but Malcolm X, and others like Robert F. Williams and Ernest "Chilly Willy" Thomas, who supported an alternative to the pacifist strategies of the national civil rights organizations, that had the most influence over the black community. In his book about the Deacons for Defense, Lance Hill wrote that disenchantment with passive resistance was common among blacks even during the early years of the Movement. They had refused to participate in non-violent protests because "they believed that passive resistance to white violence simply reproduced the same degrading rituals of domination and submission that suffused the master/slave relationship." Moreover, they saw it as difficult to live Martin Luther King's message of non-violence when the Ku Klux Klan was raping black women, burning down black houses, beating black people to death, and bombing black churches, causing the deaths of black children. As time went on the ideology of non-violence fell further and further out of favor. After 1965, pacifism was virtually scorned by the newer and more radical black power movement. Robert F. Williams was perhaps the first to create an armed self-defense unit in the black community. In 1957, Williams transformed his local NAACP branch, in Monroe, North Carolina, into an armed self-defense unit, made up of former WWII and Korean war veterans. He declared that it was time to "meet violence with violence." He stated that black citizens unable to receive legal support must defend themselves because "the federal government will not stop lynching, and since the so-called courts lynch our people legally." Another armed self-defense organization formed in Jonesboro, Louisiana, in 1964, to protect civil rights activists from the KKK. Led by Ernest Thomas, by the end of 1966, the Deacons had grown to twenty-one chapters, mostly in the states of Louisiana and Mississippi. The Deacons "guarded marches, patrolled the black community, to ward off night riders, engaged in shoot-outs with Klansmen, and even defied local police in armed confrontations." The rise of white supremacist violence, in response to desegregation, made armed self-defense a must for most black organizing efforts,

especially in the South. As the years passed, even Martin Luther King began to understand the limits of non-violence to "awaken a sense of moral shame in white southern racists." King gave up on Gandhi's theory of "redemptive suffering," the idea that if one suffers enough violence through non-violent resistance, it could eventually change the hearts and minds of the perpetrators. Moreover, King wrote, "I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today – my government." On October 15, 1966, a new group emerged, in Oakland, California, called the Black Panther Party of Self Defense. It borrowed many of the same self-defense principals and becomes the new vanguard of the Movement, not of civil rights, but of African American liberation. They were inspired by what Malcolm X stated before his death: "The time has come to fight back in self-defense whenever and wherever the black man is being unjustly and unlawfully attacked." The Black Panther Party started "armed citizens' patrols to evaluate behavior of police officers." Their confrontational, militant, and violent tactics included carrying weapons openly and making threats against police officers. Their chants included, "The Revolution has come, it's time to pick up the gun, off the pigs!"

With the rise of armed black liberation radical groups, the mostly white anti-war student movement too began to emulate the increasing rhetoric of armed struggle. As all aspects of the larger Sixties movements followed the lead of the African American civil rights movement, since the early days, their steady rise in the belief in usin violence affected both student activists and hippies. The 1960s politicos moved away from merely protesting to fighting back and finally to "bringing the war home." This often translated into the acts of demonstrating, street fighting, and bombing. The Sixties myth that non-violent protests suddenly turned violent at the end of the 1960s decade, signaling the end of the Sixties era, is not true. There always was a violent element to the Sixties. An illustration of this would be the bombing spree, from August to November 1969, by Sam Melville, Jane Alpert, and several others who bombed several corporate offices and military installations (including the Whitehall Army Induction Center) in and around New York City.[25] Relating this to the civil rights movement, according to Hill, "The myth posits that racial inequality was dismantled by a non-violent movement. . . . In this narrative Martin Luther King Jr. serves as the moral metaphor of the age while black militants-advocates of racial pride and coercive force-are dismissed as ineffective rebels who alienated whites with Black Power rhetoric and violence." Hippies too moved increasingly away from the flowers and beads of 1967 to images of armed

[25] Leslie J. A. Pickerling, *Mad Bomber Melville* (Tempe, Arizona: Arissa Media Group, 2007), 25.

survivalists in the country by 1969, as portrayed by the "Déjá Vu" album cover of Woodstock artists Crosby Stills Nash and Young (released on March 11, 1970). Hippies who remained in the cities often toughened their demeanors, using the example of the battle over People's Park in Berkeley on May 15, 1969, when 110 people were shot and wounded (one protester was killed).[26] On the other hand, some original hippies, like the Diggers, were never as benign and transcendental as the so-called flower children. In fact, Emmett Grogan, the leader of the Diggers, talked of the "revolution of violence" to come as early as the spring of 1967. Other examples of hippies being willing to fight back include the Sunset Strip curfew "hippie riots" of late 1966, the 1967 Christmas Eve bombing of the San Francisco Golden Gate park station, and a 1968 dynamiting by a hippie named Tom Archer to "spread a message of universal love" in San Francisco.[27] [28] No matter, by the end of 1967, a new type of hippie arose, calling themselves the Yippies.[29] They were a cross between the flower-type hippies and the new political white revolutionaries engaging in radical politics.

The fourth myth that Woodstock was the opposite of Altamont is a fiction of duality that did not exist. Woodstock and Altamont being polar opposites was a mass media-generated parable. "Woodstock is peace and love, the triumph of Woodstock Nation (the peak of the Sixties). Altamont is guns, drugs and the end of the world (the end of the Sixties). But in reality they were . . . the same fuck-ups, the same cast of characters." Woodstock was no more peace and love than Altamont was. The two events were not much different, except that Woodstock was better planned and luckier. Woodstock could have just as easily turned into as big a disaster as Altamont (in fact, it was a sort of disaster zone with traffic jams, lack of food, water, medicine, electricity, and sewage problems). "In one sense, Woodstock had been a success for what didn't happen – more than 400,000 young people had congregated and it did not lead to mass rioting or destruction." However, Woodstock did have its share of other problems. To begin, it only became free once it was overrun by "unruly" ticketless gatecrashers, "but its commercial origins are but a footnote in its mythology." Many who were actually at Woodstock describe their experience as not all peace, love, and fun (just as Altamont was not all conflict, hate, and misery). A former assistant Attorney General of the State of New York said, "Instead of the widespread notion of joy and an outpouring of goodness, the people I met told tragic stories of lack of consideration, nonexistent sanitation . . .

[26] Bettina Aptheker, "Historical Perspectives: In Memoriam," *Left Review: Kent State: Ten Years After*, eds. Scott L. Bills and S.R. Thulin (Spring 1980), 3.
[27] "The Motives Behind the Bombings," *San Francisco Chronicle*, February 18, 1970, A4.
[28] "Mad Bomber Reported to Be a Crusading Hippie," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 6, 1968, A3.
[29] Jerry Rubin, *Do It!* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970), 81.

fear and pain."[30] Many of the countercultural musicians performing at Woodstock also agreed. Barry Melton of Country Joe and the Fish said, "When they tell me it was great, I know they saw the movie and they weren't at the gig." Jerry Garcia of the Grateful Dead remarked, "Woodstock was a bummer. It was terrible to play at . . . ." Janis Joplin stated soon after Woodstock, "I can't relate to a quarter of a million people." Trouble simmered throughout the festival, but major catastrophes were miraculously averted. Because of the heavy rains and winds, the stage came close to collapsing. Faulty grounding shocked musicians when they touched their instruments. With the crowd growing restless, performers were persuaded to play impromptu sets to avert riots. Everywhere there were thousands of people suffering from the ill effects of drugs. When gangs of Black Panthers and Hells Angels arrived on motorcycles and acted tough, they came close to confrontations. Moreover, Abbie Hoffman, veteran of the 1968 Chicago Convention riots, gatecrashed the festival with his fellow Yippie activists intent on "liberating Woodstock from the hippie capitalists." On the third day of the "peace" festival, Hoffman walked on stage during The Who's set and tried to make a political speech, only to get hit on the head by Pete Townshend's guitar. "I think this is a pile of shit while John Sinclair rots in prison," Hoffman shouted. "Fuck off my stage," screamed The Who guitarist, "the next person that walks across the stage is going to get killed. You can laugh but I mean it." In the meantime, the militant group, the Motherfuckers, torched a hamburger van, also protesting hippie capitalism. Later, someone pulled a gun on Woodstock promoter Artie Kornfeld in the backstage area. "I was chatting to David Crosby and Stephen Stills when this crazy revolutionary dude suddenly appears and sticks a gun to my forehead," asserted Kornfeld, who reported that the man said, "I'm going to blow you away, you fuckin' hippie capitalist pig!" A roadie jumped on the person and saved Kornfeld's life. In the end, thousands at Woodstock sustained injuries (mostly cuts from stepping on barbed wire and glass while barefoot), and three people died, only one fewer than later at Altamont. One person died of a heroin overdose; another was run over accidentally by a tractor; a third festival-goer died of a ruptured appendix. Nonetheless, with most of the negativity at the Woodstock festival deliberately brushed aside, it seemed that only negativity could describe Altamont.

On the other hand, a question rarely asked is, was Altamont was really so completely bad and evil? The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported, in several articles, the next day (December 7, 1969)

[30] Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 1999), 250.

about a "rock-happy crowd" and being together.[31] While it mentioned incidents involving the Hells Angels and the crowd, the focus was on flowers thrown into the air and the people grooving to the music.[32] The *Berkeley Barb* also mentioned violence, and the killing of Meredith Hunter; however it also stated that "the majority of people enjoyed themselves and that the bummers were relatively few considering the large number of people in attendance."[33] In addition, it wrote that Altamont "wasn't a complete downer. The good vibes far outnumbered the bad." It is interesting to note the contrast between these reports and the later telling of the story, before the myth making reduced Altamont to a complete generational disenchantment. Instead, the perspective in December of 1969 was much more nonchalant, as typified by the *Berkeley Barb* article a few days later, "too bad, it might have been a beautiful high . . . maybe next time."

Interestingly, movies were made of both events and were released in 1970. While the *Woodstock* film created an incredibly positive image of the summer festival, the *Gimme Shelter* Altamont film (about the Rolling Stones 1969 U.S. tour) ironically left viewers with a prophecy of doom. As the *Woodstock* movie conjured up childlike idealism, *Gimme Shelter* distorted the complete understanding of what happened at Altamont. The pessimistic exaggerations were not accidental. According to the *New York Times*, *Rolling Stone* magazine, and *Variety*, the Maysles brothers and Charlotte Zwerin (who directed the film) applied techniques that fictionalized the Altamont event. By using "direct cinema" methods, they shaped the reporting of events. The previously mentioned magazines, in fact, criticized the three for exploiting the murder to their economic advantage. In the *Gimme Shelter* film, the filmmakers "construct a narrative to lead inexorably to the murder," by not adhering precisely to the chronology of events of the festival. Examples include the Flying Burrito Brothers playing before the Jefferson Airplane in the film, when in reality they played after them. However, in order to show the mounting tension and violence, the movie "situates the Jefferson Airplane's set, in which singer Marty Balin was knocked out by an Angel when he jumped into the crowd to stop a fight, after the Burritos." Furthermore, the movie makes it appear that the Rolling Stones opened their set with the foretelling "Sympathy for the Devil," which again is not accurate; that was the third song played. Finally, the movie makes it appear that Altamont concluded with Meredith Hunter's stabbing at the end of "Under My Thumb," which it did not. The movie ends with complete despair, and an end to the Sixties. In reality, the Rolling Stones went on to play eight more songs, and as many claim, gave one of their greatest performances ever.

[31] "We Should Be Together," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 7, 1969, A2.
[32] "300,000 Sway It with Music in Rolling Hills," *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 7, 1969, A2.
[33] "A Murderous Thing," *Berkeley Barb*, December 12-18, 1969, 2.

Nearly an hour later, at the end of the concert performance, the live audio produced of the Altamont festival reveals a thrilled, enthusiastic audience laughing, shouting, completely enjoying themselves, seemingly experiencing good vibes. Mick Jagger finishes the show by saying goodbye to the crowd: "We're going to kiss you good bye, and we leave you to kiss each other good bye, and we will see you again, alright, kiss each other goodbye, sleep at night." This surely does not fit the image of how all was death, hate, and panic. After the film's original release, its distortions ultimately made Altamont even more notorious then the murder itself. When this myth was fabricated, it secured the festival's bad reputation as marking the end of the Sixties.

To end, it would seem peculiar to consider the Woodstock and Altamont rock festivals as opposing bookends. The events took place less than four months apart. How could an event be considered the height of an era, with the other considered the era's end, in such a short time interval? Many of the same people were involved in both events. The answer lies in myth making. The chaos and murder at Altamont were ultimately overstated, and made unique, while Woodstock had all its flaws and blemishes whitewashed. The whole Sixties era can be fit into this understanding. The early 1970s are not something to be labeled as not belonging to the Sixties era because of increased violent radical behavior. And the 1960s should not to be cleansed and idealized as some kind of peaceful time. Curiously, the image of the Sixties (portrayed in films today) usually involves youth that were more typical of the 1970s than the 1960s. By the time the masses of youth started to defy society by taking drugs, listen to hard rock on free form radio, and wear their hair long, it already was 1970. In fact, during the first several years of the 1970s, the Movement actually continued to grow and find strength, although it eventually was coopted, de-politicized, and mass-marketed to youth by the establishment. By 1973, the typical American college student more closely approximated this profile (of the Sixties counterculture), and it is clear that the inspiration for this model was the countercultural that started the 1960s.[34] Nothing ended at Altamont in December of 1969, not the war in Vietnam, not the protests again imperialism, not the back-to-the-land hippie communal movement, not black liberation, not women's liberation, not the concern for the environment, nothing that had emerged from the second half of the 1960s counterculture – key players are agreed. Ralph "Sonny" Barger, leader of the Hells Angels, wrote, "All that shit about Altamont being the end of an era was a bunch of intellectual crap. The death of Aquarius, Bullshit, it was the end of nothing."[35] Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones said, "It's all so

[34] William L. O'Neil, *Coming Apart: An Informal History of America* (New York: Times Books, 1974), 397.
[35] Barger, *Hells Angel*, 168.

wonderfully convenient (that Altamont was the end of an era) things aren't quite as simple as that."[36]

[36] Alan Clayson, *Mick Jagger: The Unauthorised Biography* (London: Sanctuary Publishing Limited, 2005), 103.

4

Major Publications on the Subject

1./ "African American Freedom Movement." In *Kút (Gergely Jenő Emlékszám),* ELTE BTK Történelemtudományok Doktori Iskola Kiadványa, Bp., X/2/2010, 112-130.

2./ "Altamont, the End of the Sixties (Myths and False Endings)." In *Öt Kontinens (Az Új- és Jelenkori Egyetemes Történeti Tanszék Közleményei),* 303-333. Bp., 2011, 303-333.

3./ "The Counterculture after Altamont." In *Tanulmányok (Történelemtudományi Doktori Iskola)*, ELTE BTK Doktori Iskolák Tanulmányai Bp., 2/20128, 1-122.

4./ "The Hells Angels Have Never Been Hippies." In *Tanulmányok (Történelemtudományi Doktori Iskola)*, ELTE BTK Doktori Iskolák Tanulmányai 2/ 2012, 123-152.